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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (ADDED ADDRESSEE)

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SUBJECT: THE UK AND AFRICA: WHAT THE FCO'S STRATEGY REFRESH  
MEANS

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Classified By: Political Counselor Rick Mills for reasons 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C/NF) Summary. Following the FCO's recent "strategy refresh" of its priorities, FCO and Africa Directorate leadership have held extensive internal discussions on what the new strategy will mean for Africa. FCO plans to develop a more comprehensive foreign policy for Africa -- not just a development policy -- that provides balance to HMG's current work on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and poverty reduction. FCO wants a renewed focus on different policy groups within Africa, such as oil-rich/energy producing states (like Nigeria and Angola) and non-oil-producing, high-growth states (like Kenya). FCO leadership also want to anticipate emerging problems: population growth, urbanization, and climate change (which can produce ethnic strife); competing demands for energy; infrastructure development (where the EU has not been adequately engaged); and increasing agricultural production. In line with Prime Minister Brown's focus on multilateral institutions, they plan to work more with international and multilateral partners to speak with one voice and strengthen UN and African Union (AU) capabilities. They foresee the UK taking a less visible, less bilaterally confrontational role in Africa. Capacity-building linkages between the UN and AU are a clear early focus in the FCO's new strategy. End Summary.

Refreshing the FCO's Strategy:  
Better World, Better Britain  
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¶2. (C/NF) Following David Miliband's arrival at the Foreign Office in June 2007, the FCO undertook major inter-agency consultations on its mission and subsequently released its "Better World, Better Britain" strategy in February 2008. Reducing its former ten strategic priorities to four policy goals and three essential services, the FCO is attempting to re-brand itself as a "flexible global network" serving all of the UK government:

Policy Goals -

- ¶1. Counter terrorism, weapons proliferation and their causes
- ¶2. Promote a low carbon, high growth global economy
- ¶3. Prevent and resolve conflict
- ¶4. Develop effective international institutions, above all the UN and EU

Essential Services -

- ¶1. Support the British economy
- ¶2. Support British nationals abroad
- ¶3. Support managed migration for Britain

## Engagement in Africa

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13. (C/NF) FCO Minister of State for Africa Lord Malloch-Brown, Permanent Under-Secretary Peter Ricketts, and Africa Director Andrew Lloyd have all worked to provide an interpretation of what the new strategy means for Africa and to communicate it to FCO staff in London and at posts in Africa. Malloch-Brown has said the strategy means a more comprehensive foreign policy on Africa, not just a development policy which has largely been dominated by achieving the Millennium Development Goals and poverty reduction -- areas where the Department for International Development (DFID) lead. He sees dividing Africa into policy groups as fundamental to fruitful UK engagement because oil-producing/energy states (like Angola and Nigeria) have different needs than non-oil-producing, high growth countries (like Kenya). These differences need to be acknowledged and appropriately considered.

### Anticipating Needs

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14. (C/NF) In an effort to have a less reactive policy (driven by conflict management), Malloch-Brown and Lloyd want more long-term planning to deal with emerging problems, such as:

- population growth, urbanization, and climate change (causing scarce resources) as major potential drivers of conflict;
- competing demands for energy as a potentially complicating factor in UK relations with certain African countries;
- infrastructure development as crucial for long-term sustainability of economic growth and as an area where the EU

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should be more involved; and,

- agricultural production as a key underlying factor for stability and sustainability.

### Working with and through Multilaterals

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15. (C/NF) In line with Prime Minister Brown's focus on reforming and developing international institutions, Malloch-Brown and Lloyd see strengthening the African Union (AU) and the UN's general ability to deliver in Africa as critical elements of the new strategy. They envisage this will mean British policy and engagement will "have to be more skillful and subtle," with a greater focus on working with international and multilateral partners to speak with one voice. Consequently, the UK will take a less visible, less bilaterally confrontational role on many African issues.

### Re-deployment of Resources

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16. (C/NF) Practically speaking, the new strategy will also mean the re-deployment of some resources, away from non-focus areas. The FCO plans to reduce offices and staff in areas where other Whitehall departments have the lead, such as sustainable development, science and innovation, drugs, and organized crime. The gaps created will be made up through secondments from lead-departments to the FCO (similar to the structures used by the multi-departmental Sudan Unit and Afghan Drugs Inter-Departmental Unit) and with more direct contact between posts and other Whitehall departments. In Africa, several embassies, especially ones in conflict areas, will receive additional staff at higher grades and counter-terrorism officers will be posted for regional coverage.

Comment

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17. (C/NF) Much has yet to be determined about how the FCO's new priorities will impact the UK's approach on Africa and the effects will likely be felt gradually over the next couple of years. However, in London, the focus on the UN and AU is clear. The FCO is already looking at practical ways to increase AU capacity and will likely be pressing EU and other partners to do the same. They see linkages like the United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) and creation of the UN-AU trust fund for the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) as mechanisms for bringing the AU up to international standards on effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. Additionally, on Zimbabwe, FCO favors a UN trust fund to support AU and Southern African Development Community (SADC) elections observers. That said, the new focus on multilateral institutions also makes the FCO want to protect the reputation of UN interventions on the continent. UNAMID's struggling deployment has caused some in the FCO to pause for rethinking before replacing the EU force along the Chad-Sudan border, EUFOR, and AMISOM with UN peacekeeping operations. Ironically, at the same time as FCO is changing its Africa focus, Development Secretary Douglas Alexander is seeking to expand DFID's role in Africa to include more prominence in fragile states, such as Sudan, where FCO largely set policy on its own previously.

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